

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A linear fastener system comprising:

a shank member including an outer gripping surface means formed along a first end and a second end, ~~a first end, and a second end~~;

a collet member having a base end, a top end, an inner engaging surface means configured to mesh with said outer gripping surface means of said shank member, and an outer tapered compression surface; and

a compression ring member having a base end, a front end, an inner tapered compression surface, ~~said inner tapered surface~~ having a substantially conjugate taper ~~as~~ conforming to said outer tapered surface of said collet member, and an outer surface;

said inner tapered compression surface of said compression ring member constructed and arranged for linear overlapping movement in relation to said outer tapered compression surface of said collet member between a first gripping position and a second release position, said gripping position resulting in frictional engagement between a substantial portion of said inner tapered

compression surface and said outer tapered compression surface to maintain engagement of said collet and said compression ring members and to compress said collet member thereby gripping said outer gripping surface of said shank member and wherein said release position maintains a sufficient portion of said frictional cooperation to maintain an interfitting relationship between said collet and said compression ring members and results in expansion of said collet member thereby releasing said outer gripping surface of said shank member.

Claim 2. (Cancelled)

Claim 3. (Withdrawn) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said inner engaging surface is generally smooth.

Claim 4. (Withdrawn) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said inner engaging surface is threaded.

Claim 5. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said inner engaging surface is knurled.

Claim 6. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said inner engaging surface has a conjugate shape in relation to said outer gripping surface of said shank member.

Claim 7. (Withdrawn) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said inner engaging surface has at least one inwardly depending lip, wherein said inwardly depending lip is constructed and arranged to cooperate with a conjugate surface on said outer gripping surface of said shank member.

Claim 8. (Withdrawn) The linear fastener system of claim 7 wherein said inwardly depending lip is constructed and arranged to cooperate with at least one snap ring groove.

Claim 9. (Withdrawn) The linear fastener system of claim 7 wherein said inwardly depending lip includes at least one conical surface; wherein said outer gripping surface of said shank member has a conjugate conical surface.

Claim 10. (Cancelled)

Claim 11. (Withdrawn) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said tensioning portion includes at least two generally flat surfaces.

Claim 12. (Withdrawn) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said tensioning portion includes at least one groove extending around the circumference of said first end of said shank member.

Claim 13. (Previously Presented) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said shank member includes a tensioning portion, said tensioning portion includes at least one internal bore extending inwardly from said first end along the longitudinal centerline of said shank member.

Claim 14. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 13 wherein said internal bore includes threads.

Claim 15. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 13 wherein said internal bore includes at least one groove extending around the circumference of said internal bore.

Claim 16. (Currently Amended) A linear fastener system comprising:

a shank member including an outer gripping surface means formed along a first end and a second end, ~~a first end, and a second end;~~

a collet member having a base end, a top end, an inner engaging surface means configured to mesh with said outer gripping surface means of said shank member, and an outer tapered compression surface; and

a compression ring member having a base end, a front end, an inner tapered compression surface, ~~said inner tapered surface~~ having a substantially conjugate taper as conforming to said outer tapered surface of said collet member, and an outer surface;

said inner tapered compression surface of said compression ring member constructed and arranged for linear overlapping movement in relation to said outer tapered compression surface of said collet member between a first gripping position and a second release position, wherein positioning said inner tapered compression surface over said outer tapered compression surface defines said gripping position to compress said collet member thereby gripping said outer gripping surface of said shank member and wherein positioning first groove over said outer tapered compression surface defines said release position allowing

expansion of said collet member thereby releasing said outer gripping surface of said shank member;

Claim 17. (Previously Presented) The linear fastener system of claim 16 wherein said outer tapered compression surface of said collet member and said inner tapered surface of said compression member are constructed and arranged to maintain an interfitting relationship in said release position.

Claim 18. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said outer surface of said compression member includes at least two wrench flats for increasing or decreasing the said tension applied to said shank member.

Claim 19. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said collet member is constructed of plastic.

Claim 20. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said collet member is constructed of copper.

Claim 21. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said collet member is constructed of brass.

Claim 22. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said collet member is constructed of bronze.

Claim 23. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said collet member is constructed of aluminum.

Claim 24. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said collet member is constructed of steel.

Claim 25. (Original) The linear fastener system of claim 1 wherein said collet member is constructed of rubber.

Claim 26. (Previously Presented) The linear fastening system of claim 16 wherein said outer tapered compression surface includes at least one second groove having a reduced diameter with respect to said outer tapered compression surface, said second groove constructed and arranged to align with said groove in said inner surface of said compression ring while in said release position.

Claim 27. (Previously Presented) The linear fastening system of claim 16 wherein said shank member includes a tensioning portion

at said first end whereby said shank member is configured to be tensilely loaded when said collet member is in said release position.

Claim 28. (Previously Presented) The linear fastening system of claim 27 wherein said tensioning portion includes a frangible stem, whereby said frangible stem is severed from said first end of said shank member when said shank member reaches a predetermined tension.